WATCHING AT GOLGOTHA

CAMILLE ESTORNELLE, S. T. D.

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9 CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS THOUGHT)

St. Matthew 27:36

"And Sitting Down There They Watched Him"

WATCHING AT GOLGOTHA

Meditations on the Words from the Cross

BY

CAMILLE ESTORNELLE, S.T.D.

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I Dedicate
This Little Book
to
MY MOTHER

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FOREWORD

My hope in this work is simply to bring some of the verities closer to men and women in the daily walks of life.

I send it forth with a prayer that it may help men and women to a closer view of Jesus by letting them see how close He has been to them.

CAMILLE ESTORNELLE.

INTRODUCTORY MEDITATION

Contents

1. The Sin of Man.
2. The Love of God.

We gather together today as Christian people, once more to sit at the foot of the Cross of our Saviour, to watch and pray, to contemplate and learn.

As we listen to those words which came from His holy lips let us try to catch some new meaning so that these old but ever new words may teach us lessons still unlearned.

Sitting and watching means nothing unless we contemplate this tragedy upon which we have fixed the eyes of imagination.

What does it all mean? For what purpose is this shedding of blood?

It is the supreme manifestation of the love of God and the sin of man. They have come together in Christ Jesus.

Badness is trying to get rid of goodness. The Lord of Life did nothing to warrant the death penalty. On the contrary the accusations of His enemies bear witness to the fact of His goodness.

Let us therefore gather from this spectacle first of all, the sin of man that brought it about and the love of God that endured it.

The Sin of Man

To the minds of many, sin is only a theological term which seeks to explain by contrast the existence of that which is destructive in human nature as compared with that which is constructive. Some have tried to explain sin away by calling it a figment of mortal mind. Others have ignored its presence only to find themselves within its power.

Sin is a fact in spiritual life; the result of which we see all about us. It was the sin of man that crucified the Lord of Goodness. It is still the sin of man that crucifies the goodness, beauty and truth today which interferes with his sin.

We have been told that education will eliminate sin and that the so-called evil in the world is due to a lack of education. "Educate a man and he will cease to do wrong," is a common phrase among those who deny sin as a spiritual reality.

Far be it from me to decry the wonderful power of education. We know its importance; we see its marvelous results. It is truly a great force for righteousness in the world, but it does not do away with sin. The world is full of educated people who sin every day of their lives. Why is it that a physician, for instance, trained in the art of medicine, fully aware of the action and reaction of certain drugs in the human

anatomy, becomes a drug addict? My dear friends, education alone cannot rid the world of sin.

Again, we have heard it said that that which we term sin exists because the slums exist—because poor and unfortunate beings live in a crowded-together, incongenial environment. "Clean up the slums!" they tell us, "Remove the children from that destructive atmosphere, then we will soon realize that sin is no more." In other words, change the environment and you work the cure. It is indeed our duty to see that children are brought up in the best of home surroundings; that the vile atmosphere be changed in which many find themselves, but after we have done this, have we exterminated sin?

There are millions of homes far removed from vile environments. Out in God's wide open fields, surrounded with all the comforts and conveniences that money can buy, and yet the people in these homes are full of sin and sin every day. Sin has crept even behind the walls of monasteries and convents where holy people have secluded themselves from the world's noise and clamour. All our sinful people are not in the slums or behind the bars; many of them live in the best of homes and have plenty to eat and wear.

Here is your Lord and mine nailed to a cross, an instrument of death for the criminal. He is the victim of the sin of man. It was hatred, the same hatred

that you feel in your heart today, that nailed Him there. It was prejudice, the same prejudice that keeps men apart in life today, the same class distinctions that we are so proud to maintain, that sent Him to that cross.

It was revenge, the spirit of vindictiveness, the desire to get even, that nailed Him to that cross, and drove the spear into His side. Strange enough, it was the religious leaders of His day, blind leaders of the blind, who instigated it and followed it up to the end.

Sin is real, and it is the fruit of sinfulness that we now are gazing on.

The Love of God

The love of God manifests itself. As we sit and contemplate the terrible exhibition of sin, we also see how wonderful is the power of the love of God. Above all human corruption and vileness, self-seeking and selfishness, stands the eternal truth—*God so loved the world that He gave His Son.*

He is God who for us and for our salvation became Man that He might teach us the possibilities of our human nature. He endured the cross. Through His death and suffering He has given us the thing which our experience teaches us we so badly need—Redemption.

We have come then today to have the lesson of the Cross sink deeper into our hearts. To be drawn to

Jesus and to know that love which bought us once for all on Calvary's tree. As we contemplate the truth of our redemption, we can say:

> Thus while His death my sin displays,
> In all its blackest hue,
> Such is the mystery of grace
> It seals my pardon too.

THE FIRST WORD

Contents

1. The Reality of Forgiveness.
2. The Completeness of Forgiveness.

"Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

As we sit and watch, we seem to hear the sound of a voice coming from the Cross. We listen intently and we recognize it to be the voice of our Lord.

Hark, He is praying! Do you hear those words? "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." How strange! How marvelous! Praying for His murderers when He should be calling God's vengeance upon them. My animal nature tells me He is wrong. My nature tells me to pray for my enemies, that they may be severely punished, not for their salvation, but for their damnation. I want those who harm me to suffer. I want to see them suffer. If I cannot pay them back for the harm they did, I hope and pray my children will take up the feud and vindicate their parents.

The forgiveness of injury is a hard thing, but let us admit it is not impossible. Have you ever tried it and found it impossible? Jesus is here teaching us forgiveness and He has never yet asked mankind to do that which is impossible.

We must catch and send forth into life the spirit of that prayer from the Cross.

It is the true spirit of the Christ, uttered while He was in the midst of pain. The thorns, the nails, the hot sun, the scoffer at His side, those about Him mocking and railing, all contributing to His pain of body, mind and soul.

In spite of the pain, He thought of others. Those who were having active part in his crucifixion and others who by their silence had participated in it, all were in His mind, and He prayed for them. He did the unheard-of, the unexpected thing.

He showed that love could not be conquered by hate. That He still loved them even though they were killing Him by the most slow and torturing process ever devised for vengeance.

Do you see the picture? Here are men at their worst, and just a few feet above them is the victim of their lust, showing them man at his best. Those are not the words of a coward, but the words of courage. It is the greatest manifestation of the invincible power of love that you and I have ever seen or ever will see this side of the grave.

Let us therefore learn today, as we sit at the foot of the Cross, the lesson of forgiveness.

The Reality of Forgiveness

Forgiveness is as real as is sin. The message of forgiveness was the principal theme of the apostles

of old. They went about crying aloud, "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

Without God's forgiveness a man is not a Christian at all. We pray "Forgive us our trespasses," we declare in the Church's Creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." Is forgiveness real to you? If it is not real it is because God is not real, sin is not real, love is not real.

Professor Huxley once said, "There is no forgiveness in nature," but because there is not forgiveness in nature is no sign there is no forgiveness with God. God does forgive sin and it is His forgiveness that brings us peace and gives us courage and strength in life. Man then is brought face to face with a forgiving God. A forgiving God must have forgiving children.

The closing words of that great Apostle of Love, St. John the Divine, were "Little children, love one another." Have we learned to forgive the personal injuries of our fellow men? "As we forgive those who trespass against us" completes the petition for God's forgiveness. It means the complete suppression of personal anger which we so frequently permit to burn in our souls consuming the sweet spirit of forgiveness.

When God forgives us, we are reconciled back to Him; when we forgive our brothers and sisters in

this world we reconcile them to ourselves. Jacob's forgiveness of his brethren is a wonderful example of the joy of reconciliation.

Just as we are in constant need of God's forgiveness, so we need constantly to practice forgiveness among ourselves, for the children of a forgiving God must learn to forgive one another and live in peace.

Individuals, communities, nations calling themselves Christians have not yet caught the spirit of forgiveness. They still hold malice. They still keep grudges alive. They still seek revenge. God has forgiven them, but they have forgiven no one on earth. "From whence cometh wars and strife among you" saith the Apostle James, "come they not from the lusts that war among yourselves?"

Society's motto is, "Once a thief, always a thief," "Once a liar and deceiver, always one." Once you are down we will keep you there, for you are not fit to be anywhere else.

Even though you repent they do not believe it.

The sins against society are caused by society's own unforgiving spirit.

Each one of us is a member of society, and we contribute an unforgiving attitude to the whole. Our social life never will manifest the spirit of forgiveness until each one of us possesses that spirit within his soul.

There are many men and women today who are worse spiritually than they have ever been, because they sinned once and you never forgave them. You have always preferred to believe the bad about them and to doubt the good. You have never reconciled them to yourself. They have tried a "come back," but you have stopped it every time.

I am not asking men and women to tolerate wrong, to encourage wickedness, but am asking them to put the spirit of forgiveness where it is most needed. Our uncharitableness is staring Jesus in the face while the Sun of Righteousness shines forth in pardon and peace and reconciliation upon the just and the unjust.

Revenge, malice and hatred must be put away by Christians. Grudges, individual, social, national, make up the misery and the hell in which the world finds itself today. We rob ourselves of the beauty and the joy of life, of its power and freedom, and drag our worthless selves over the years because we will not take unto ourselves the sweet spirit of forgiveness.

The Completeness of Forgiveness

God's forgiveness is complete. God blots out our transgressions. He obliterates them altogether and leaves nothing but the clear blue sky over our heads. He casts our sin behind Him. We are completely forgiven and have a new start.

I have heard people say they will forgive, but never forget. To forgive and not forget is not to forgive at all. It is a sign that Christ's spirit does not dwell You *must* forget.
in our hearts. Your forgiveness must be complete.

This unmerciful and false conception of forgiveness manifests itself from time to time in our community life. When we dig out of the past the misdeeds of our fellowmen only to show them to strangers. When we refuse a place in the community and the Church to those who have sinned and repented. When we frown upon them and detract from them. When we induce the newcomer to join us in our never-forgetting forgiveness and show our contempt for others by our Pharisaical "holier than thou" scorn.

Forgive and forget. It is your Christian duty and privilege. You say you cannot, but have you really tried? Try again. God has forgiven and forgotten your sin. Remember the Golden Rule.

Here then is your Saviour and mine nailed to His cross. The foot of it is in the midst of humanity.

The top of it reaches the skies. The arms of it extend from east to west. It covers the earth with a message of forgiveness.

Can you sit here and gaze upon that Cross and still retain ill will and ill feeling in the face of your forgiving Lord?

Forgive and forget the wrong that others have done to you and yours. Seek the complete forgiveness from those whom you have harmed.

Let the dead weight of human unforgiveness be removed from your soul and feel the joy and peace and freedom, as you leap forward to a life of selfless service based upon complete forgiveness.

THE SECOND WORD

Contents

1. Retrospection.
2. Introspection.
3. Prospection.

"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

Fixing our eyes on that spectacle at Golgotha we observe that two others are sharing the same fate as our Lord. Two malefactors were crucified with Him, one on either side.

Enough to crucify Jesus without making it worse by adding two bad men and placing the Christ between. However, Jesus is the friend of sinners and is willing to be their friend to the very end.

The robbers are engaged in a conversation. One of them is mocking Jesus. He says, "If Thou be the Christ, then save Thyself and us." The other rebukes him, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" Then he turns to Jesus and says, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Quick as a flash comes the reply from the lips of the Master, "Verily I say unto you, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

We see here a beautiful example of real conversion, and the redemptive power of Jesus, manifesting itself in a moment when He seems, from a human point of view, to be at His weakest.

Sometimes in the life of that robber he had given thought to the seriousness of life, and perhaps in the solitude of his prison cell he had uttered a prayer for pardon and peace. He never could have been converted otherwise. Those hidden emotions had now come to the front and he pressed them all into that one petition which Jesus understood: "Lord remember me."

Let us make a closer study of this subject and learn of the experience that led to his conversion, which must be of a similar nature in all of us.

Retrospective Attitude

By this term I mean looking back to the days when in some unexpected moment we saw a vision of ourselves as God would have us be. Perhaps it came when our hearts were touched by a sermon, as we read some great book, joined in a great hymn, or came forward to kneel at the altar and make our communion, then it was that we realized as we never had realized before what God meant us to be.

The vision long since has disappeared but it made an impression never to be forgotten. We are able to see with our mind's eye how far removed we are from it. The mere fact of referring to that vision has again lifted the curtain, and we are carried back to that day or days when it came.

Why, we ask, are we not becoming like it? The answer leads us to the second experience.

The Introspective Attitude

Looking inwardly we see the contrast between our real selves and the vision we have of ourselves.

We see that the facts of life have pressed us so much that we have given up its poetry for its prose.

We see how we have gotten into the rut of living, thereby burying the ambitions that make life worth while.

We see how we have substituted "making a living" for making a life.

We see how we have accepted dead, fixed standards and discarded our high hopes.

We see how we have settled down to an uninspired daily grind only to find ourselves growing cynical and unhappy as we get farther and farther away from our ideal.

God never intended such a thing to happen to us. He gave us that vision and meant that we should make an honest effort to reach it. By His grace we will be strengthened and encouraged and be brought back to the path every time we get off. To go through life without a vision is to commit spiritual suicide.

We have settled down to take what we find in life,

to admire the beautiful. We have forgotten that we are not here just to take life as it comes, but to make life; not only to admire the beautiful, but to appropriate it for ourselves. We have sacrificed our spiritual lives to the conventional sense of living, with which we have become enamoured. The vision is still hovering about us, and we have never yet taken a second look in its direction.

The Prospective Attitude

We looked into the past and saw the vision of ourselves. We looked into ourselves and saw our real self against its background. By the Prospective Attitude I mean to look out at Jesus and see in Him the realization of all our hopes. "Follow me and I will make you," says Jesus. It is His constant cry to all of us. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

We see that we cannot help ourselves, and the Prospective Attitude bids us look to Him.

The first thing that Jesus says to us is *give me your will.* That power in us to choose has been exercised and controlled by us, and we find that we have been choosing all the rubbish of life with which we have covered the true vision of ourselves, buried it beneath

the debris of our own misdirected will. Jesus says to us, surrender your will by being willing to do my will. Restore or convert your will to mine.

The second thing Jesus says to us is, *let me control your thoughts.* We cannot think on the noble things of life unless we think His thoughts after Him. The idealism of life will only be a smoke screen until true thoughts find a controlling place in our minds.

The Apostle Paul says, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." St. Paul was thinking Christ's thoughts after Him. To think with Christ is to think good things. *Jesus wants your mind.*

The third thing Jesus wants, as you look to Him to fulfill your vision, is your love. God gave us a heart to love Him and His children with, but we have been wasting our best love on worthless things. Our hearts are divided. We love God and we love the world. These two cannot go together. It must be God or the world. God isn't taking second place in any man's life. To love Him first is to put "first things first" and get a real perspective of life.

Most of our unhappiness comes from a wrong perspective. We worship occasionally, we pray when we are in trouble, we make spasmodic communions, and

toss His Church a few pennies with which to carry on His work. Jesus says, *you must give me your heart, all of it.* "Where your heart is, there is your treasure also." You must love me above all others. You must take upon you Christ's Will, Mind and Heart.

I believe the robber on the cross was converted in much the same manner. He first looked backward and saw what he might have been. Then he saw against its background what he really was. Then he looked to Jesus, and gave Him his will and mind and heart.

He converted his real self. That is, he turned himself over to Jesus, and Jesus accepted him with the words, "Today shalt thou be with me."

So your Saviour awaits your surrender. Others have become true because He made them so. You can still become true. There is no room in the Christian religion for despair. Surrender, turn over yourself to Jesus now while life is yours, and the day of your conversion will mark your entrance into the joy and fullness of a life that never ends.

THE THIRD WORD

Contents

1. The Responsibility of Sonship.
2. The Responsibility of Friendship.

"Woman, behold thy son,"
"Son, behold thy mother."

The considerateness of Jesus for others continues to manifest itself amid His own pain and suffering.

In the First Word He thought and prayed for the forgiveness of His murderers. In the Second Word He accepted the conversion of the robber at His side.

He now looks down from the Cross and sees His mother and His friend. He thinks of their future, and utters those words which commend each of them to the other's care. Scripture tells us that "from that hour that disciple took her unto his own house."

It is to be regretted that the Mother of Jesus finds so little place, if any, in Protestant pulpits, while the virtues and accomplishments of other holy women in both the Old and New Testaments are frequently discussed in sermons.

It seems to me that the considerateness of Jesus for His mother would at least teach us to give her a place in our thoughts greater than any other of the holy women in the Bible. Sometimes our theology affects our religion. At least in this instance Protestant theology has dropped Mary into oblivion, fearing lest much said about her would detract from Christ.

Those who mention her name in connection with the religion of her Son are almost anathematized, but Jesus never felt that way about His mother.

Perhaps, had we been present at the cricifixion and stood beside that broken-hearted woman, seeing her going through that terrible experience, we might have recognized how saintly and true she was, and given her a place of high esteem, and held her before the world as a great example for womanhood.

Mary fulfilled the prophecy of her Magnificat "For behold all generations shall call me blessed," when she stood at the foot of the Cross, enduring the unspeakable anguish of motherhood, as she bade farewell to her crucified Son.

At her side stood St. John, the youngest of the apostles, sympathizing with his Master in the hour of deepest agony and woe. Jesus speaks to His friend, "Behold thy mother"; take care of her as though she were your mother. Then He turns to His mother and says, "Woman, behold thy son," as much as to say, Mother, I must leave you, but he, my friend, will take care of you. Regard him as a son.

There are two lessons for us to learn from this Word. It touches upon two important phases of our common life: the Responsibility of Sonship and the Responsibility of Friendship. Let us briefly consider them.

The Responsibility of Sonship

Responsibility is a word frequently used in our everyday conversation, but its meaning is seldom felt. Much of our lives is spent without realizing the importance of a sense of responsibility for the things we say, the things we do and the things we contemplate doing. Individual responsibility is giving way to corporate responsibility. We have forgotten that no kind of responsibility is worth having unless it is individual. The individiual is the unit of society, and if the unit does not possess responsibility no grouping of units ever will.

To be a son is a privilege which carries responsibility with it; but like most of our privileges we never take advantage of it until it is either too late or almost so.

Jesus never would have touched us had He not been a son. His love and consideration for His mother never ceased all through His earthly life. Her authority over Him ceased when His ministry began, but His sense of the responsibility of sonship continued.

Would that our young men and women could follow His example and feel the joy, the privilege, the opportunity to serve that come from a sense of the responsibility of sonship.

It carries with it, first and foremost, consideration for our loved ones, a desire to serve them, to think of their future and make plans large enough to include them. How many sons and daughters in our land today are so busy with their own affairs that they have become inconsiderate toward those who brought them into being, who cared for them and nourished them out of the helpless years of infancy and childhood and set them on the threshold of life.

Like the birds of the air they have left their nest as soon as they were able to fly, and they have flown so far away that they have forgotten the place where they first saw the light of day.

No home condition can justify a son for losing his responsibility of sonship.

The institution of the family will live as long as we exercise our sonship. Jesus honored the institution of the family all His life.

The tendency in many quarters is to disregard the responsibility of the home. Other institutions are being launched to take its life and place. Let me say to you, there is nothing to substitute for the family. The family is the foundation of our American life, destroy it and you have destroyed everything that makes life. When the family goes, everything goes with it. The two secure foundations upon which life is built are the family and the Church. Out of these two comes a

civilization that is worth having. Without them we shall have chaos.

Responsibility of sonship fully exercised will protect the home from the many influences which tend to crush it. Be true, sons and daughters, to your earthly parents, for the love and faithfulness, the loyalty and devotion, the consideration and self-sacrifice which we show them will grow in us, giving us a better knowledge of the responsibility of our divine sonship. "And because ye are sons," says the Apostle, "God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son in your hearts crying, Abba, Father." A true son of God must be a true son of man. Jesus was both.

The Responsibility of Friendship

Jesus said to His disciples, "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends." That carries responsibility with it.

St. John was standing near the foot of the cross upon which his Friend and Lord and Saviour was dying. Jesus showed the true spirit of friendship all through His earthly life and here at the last He entrusts His mother to the care of His friend, a friend that He made by being a Friend.

The New Testament record reveals the life, love and

sacrifice of the greatest Friend of man that ever walked this earth. Jesus, the friend of saints and sinners, has left us an example that we may follow.

Friendship, as we know it today, is far removed from that example. I fear we have placed a price on our friendship, but Jesus never did. Our so-called friendship often degenerates into self-seeking ambition. We confine it to a certain group or clique and extend it if possible only to those whom we regard as "persons of distinction," so that we may boast of their acquaintance and bask in the light of reflected glory.

We do not have a passion for friends as Jesus had. The reason is quite evident. We never think that responsibility goes with friendship, that it must carry us along the highways and byways of life to find friends by being a friend.

The only form of friendship that we have greatly emphasized is the "absent-treatment" form. We build Homes for Friendless Children and erect institutions for the friendless men and women of this earth. This is excellent as far it goes, but it does not go far enough. We think friendship ends when we erect the building when it really has only begun. Personal friendship and interest must sustain it.

This "absent treatment" form of friendship shows itself in our modern conception of charity which we handle by committees and secretaries and trustees

and what not. Promiscuous giving of money, in the name of charity, is a modern sin against God and the recipient. The beggar at your door may need money. In most instances he needs more than money. He needs a friend. He needs words of encouragement. He needs your interest. He needs the opportunity that you may be able to give him. Money is not the cure-all. Greater than money is Friendliness.

Our present system of living may call for institutions of mercy to take care of the "unfortunates" of life, but these institutions are not substitutes for personal friendships. Be a friend in a personal sense to those with whom you come in contact, regardless of social distinction. There is no social distinction in Heaven. Live by the side of the road, as the poet puts it, "and be a friend to all the world."

Most of our national and international eruptions can be traced to a lack of that sweet spirit of friendliness and mutual understanding.

Christ was the friend of Mary and Martha and Lazarus and Peter and John and James, and all the rest in far-off Palestine. His friendship has not ceased. Is it yours? Have you claimed it? Do you prize it? If you answer in the affirmative, then I say to you, it is the wish of your Friend that you emulate His friendship. Listen, He speaks: "Inasmuch as ye

did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

Holy Saviour, Friend unseen,
The faint, the weak, on Thee may lean;
Help me, throughout life's varying scene,
By faith to cling to Thee.

THE FOURTH WORD

Contents

1. Loneliness of Character.
2. Loneliness in Being Misunderstood.
3. Loneliness of Sorrow.

"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Jesus is now nearing the close of His ministry. The very elements seem to be in harmony with the mind of the Master at this moment, for we are told that there was darkness over the earth and that it thundered.

Out of the darkness came the sound of His voice: *"Eloi Eloi, lama sabachthani,"* the Aramaic for "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

We must not lose sight of the fact that Jesus was truly man, and that he lived and died under human conditions and experiences. Scripture tells us that He was weary, and that He once suffered hunger, and that He wept. Now, He is going through the most awful experience of physical, mental and spiritual pain. These words "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" are a quotation from the Twenty-second Psalm. Jesus must have been repeating the psalm to Himself, and this verse is but the natural cry of all humanity as they face that experience and separation we call death.

We can readily understand this Word coming from Representative Humanity, for Jesus had linked Himself with our common life from its cradle to its grave.

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The experience of birth and death is something each of us has to pass through for himself. We cannot appoint proxies to act in our stead, we have to face these experiences all alone. We cannot recall the experience of birth because memory fails us, but we know that we are born one by one and that we die one by one. Of course, the experience of death is one of which we have no knowledge, for it is a novelty to each one of us, but we can see that it is original, and its originality must bring with it a feeling of loneliness as we "set out to sea." We die as individuals, not as groups. Death is the common experience of all, yet unique to each.

We can rest assured, however, that at the hour of our "launching" He who passed through the gate of death will be with us. He said He would be, and on His Word we rest and comfort ourselves.

Jesus was now passing through the sorrow of that loneliness that comes with death. His sympathizers at the Cross and even His mother never completely understood His deepest thoughts or His great purpose. He was alone with the Father as He walked the streets of Jerusalem. He was alone now in His dying moments, bearing to the grave the sins of the world. Representative Humanity, therefore, utters the words of all humanity in its hour of darkness: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

We know now, as we never knew before, that God never forsakes us, even though we may forsake and forget Him. Our lack of faith may make us think that when we are passing through the vicissitudes of life God forsakes us. We are inclined to cry out these words that Jesus uttered from the Cross and that David sang in his Twenty-second Psalm long years before, but, "only believe and thou shalt see, that God is all in all to thee." Men in all generations have endured in His name and grounded their faith in His gracious promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

There are just two or three points I would like you to consider as we think of the subject of loneliness:

The Loneliness of Character

To be great is to be lonely. The great suffer from loneliness just because they are great, for there is no companionship in greatness. Jesus was very much alone because He was great in all respects. He was a great Teacher, a great Lover of mankind, a great Spiritual Leader, a great Philosopher; in fact, He exceeds all men in greatness. But I particularly want to lay emphasis upon the greatness of His character and the loneliness that was part of His greatness of character. The nobleness of His character speaks for itself. To

Him the whole world turns for guidance in matters spiritual and moral. He is the only example of the things in which true greatness consists. He showed us human nature at its best.

The man with a temptation to overcome, with a besetting sin or weakness to control, with suffering to endure, bewildered by mind and soul, can look to Him for the example and power to overcome, the strength to conquer, the patience to endure and guidance in the hour of darkness.

He was lonely in His greatness of character. No man climbed to that height, save with His aid. He stands on the top of the mountain and we gather in the valley and by His power climb to Him one by one.

How Jesus must have felt, nailed to the Cross by the very men and women to whom He came, to impart His character! There He was, outstretched on a tree in unspeakable loneliness of character.

The pages of history record the lives of men and women who have become great in character and who, like their Lord and Saviour, have met popular dislike instead of popular favor. They, too, have been lonely, from a human point of view. But character is our greatest asset. It is the only thing we take with us beyond the grave. It is the thing that fits us for life with Him. There is a loneliness in growth of character, but we know that it is not a loneliness that comes

from His absence. It is a solitude that savors of the world.

I bid you sacrifice everything for strength of character. It is greater than anything else in its meaning and scope. It has its cross and its sorrow and its loneliness, but it also has a joy and triumph that no man can take from you. It is an eternal possession.

Loneliness of Being Misunderstood

The loneliness of high character is closely linked with the loneliness of being misunderstood.

Jesus was misunderstood from the beginning of His earthly life all through to the very end.

His mother could not understand what He meant when He said to her, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" In His later ministry they accused Him of casting out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of devils. They said He ate with Publicans and Sinners, which implied He was as objectionable to them as His associates. He was called a gluttonous man and a wine bibber. They said He threatened to destroy the Temple, and even on the Cross when He cried out to God, they said He was calling for Elias.

In view of these facts can His followers ever expect to be understood? Many of you recall perhaps a re-

cent play entitled, "The Fool." The Fool was the greatest character in the play. He was the Fool because he tried to live like Christ in principle.

It seems to be a regular part of human nature to sit in judgment over our fellow men, especially if those men are more deeply concerned than we with practical Christianity. These enemies of goodness delight to twist the high purposes and ambitions and deeds of others, hoping to drag them down into the valley of their own low spiritual level, where it is so hazy that spiritual verities are not visible.

The horror of the loneliness of being misunderstood is ours to share with Him. It haunts us all the days of our lives. The higher we climb toward Christ Jesus, the more we seem to be misunderstood.

If we tell the truth, they say we are lying. If we are honest in our dealings, they say it its because it paid us to be so for once. If we do a kind deed, it is because we expect to be rewarded later on, or we have some other ulterior motive. Our sincerity is questioned; our devotion is ridiculed.

It is but a repetition of the Cross and its misunderstood Saviour. There is no true Crown unless it accompanies a Cross. There is sorrow mingled with the loneliness of being misunderstood. I would rather be misunderstood by the world than by my Lord, for "the things of this world pass away," but truth and

Goodness, Faith and Hope, Love and Loyalty never die. They came out of the grave on the morning of His Resurrection, and they "die no more," for they live in Him.

Strive for the best because it is the best, because you love the best; even though you may seem a failure to the world, you are not a failure to Jesus. You may be misunderstood, but what is that to you? "Follow thou me," Jesus says. You may have all the wealth in the world, but you are poor if He "dwelleth not in you and you in Him."

Finally,

The Loneliness of Sorrow

Sorrow, like death, is common to all. It links us with those of the past and those of the present. It keeps our hearts soft and floods our lives with sympathy for others, because we know we are not exempt from suffering.

There is an individuality attached to sorrow that we cannot explain. Really, no two suffer alike.

There is much comfort in the shake of hand that carries a message from a heart in sympathy, but sufferers still are lonely, for we cannot fully enter into their grief.

Jesus was alone in His sorrow. Heavily laden with the burden of man's sin, He suffered agony and

sweated blood. That solitary Jesus is your Saviour and mine. In the day of your sorrow think of Him. Pray to Him; seek Him, for He alone thoroughly understands. "Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden and I will refresh you." "Take my yoke upon you," He says, which means, link yourself with me and let us both carry the burden of your sorrow; then its loneliness will disappear.

So we close this meditation where it began, at the foot of the cross. His loneliness of character, His loneliness in being misunderstood, His loneliness in the hour of sorrow, we see them all at Calvary. "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." Lay to heart these words from His holy lips.

Lift up your eyes unto the hills from whence cometh your salvation! He will not forsake, for

The soul that to Jesus hath fled for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to His foes;
That soul, though all hell shall endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no, never forsake.

THE FIFTH WORD

CONTENTS

1. The Pain We Bring Our Bodies by Disobedience
2. The Pain We Bring to Others
3. The Incomprehensible Causes of Pain

"Knowing that all things were accomplished, He said, 'I thirst.'"

"I thirst."

It is a statement of physical distress. We can only imagine how the hot eastern sun must have intensified that thirst which was almost beyond human endurance.

It was customary to serve those who were to be crucified with a preparation to drink which deadened their faculties; but Jesus had refused that antidote. He would not deaden His faculties.

His thirst became unbearable and finally He accepted the vinegar offered, which for the time being served to quench those parched lips. He was now very close to death.

There are many ways in which we may consider this Word. It is full of suggestions applicable to our life. In this Word Jesus reveals the real physical pain which He was undergoing.

This word pain immediately brings to our minds that old, old problem of pain. It is a problem to many, and one which has no end of difficulties to overcome before we can fully understand it.

Some few years ago I received a letter from a lady

in which she said, "My greatest difficulty is to reconcile a God of Love in a World of Pain. Why does God permit His children to suffer so much pain and sorrow?"

Upon first glance, and that is all it usually receives, pain does seem a problem that has no solution. Many have tried to get rid of pain by telling us it is merely in our minds. Change the thought and the pain will not exist.

It is quite true that many have imaginary pains, and getting their minds away from such imaginations the phantom of pain will disappear. But there are others who suffer real pain.

To deny the existence of pain is as absurd as to deny the existence of matter or that we have a body. We may deny imaginary pain a place in our lives, but real pain cannot be abolished by denying it. Its reality we soon recognize.

It seems to me far better to face the fact of pain and endeavor to find its opportunity and purpose than to attempt to deny its reality. The lady who said she could not reconcile the love of God in a world of pain forgot the most important things connected with pain: its purpose and its opportunity. She was only thinking of pain without its setting.

Find the purpose and the opportunity of pain and

you have the answer to the problem. There is a way out, but it is not by denial—it is by fulfilment.

When we give this matter serious consideration we see that the "problem" in pain is not God's but ours. We think of pain only when we suffer or see someone else suffering. Have we ever thought of the things which cause pain, and realized how much of the responsibility for the existence of pain is really ours?

I have heard some sufferers say, "I don't know what I did that God should cause me to be so severely punished with this terrible pain."

What an awful conception some people have of God! A God who permits His children to suffer punishment is not my conception of God. My conception of God is far from a God of revenge. I am given my conception of God by Jesus and not by the Old Testament. Jesus had compassion, and those who were brought to Him in physical distress, or mental, He gladly "touched them and they were healed."

It is a sin against a God of love to hold Him responsible for the pain in this world when we are ourselves responsible. The punishment we say God is administering to us is the punishment which we are administering to ourselves and to others.

Just stop and think for a moment of the many, many things which cause pain here in this world and

which God tells us will always give us pain and yet which we heedlessly enter into.

Think for instance of

The Pain We Bring Our Bodies by Disobedience

The human body is the most wonderful thing in the world. Dr. Galen once said: "For strength, for grace, for motion, for beauty, no one can improve it, and no one can create a human face, save our heavenly Artist."

One of our great poets said, "What a piece of work is man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, in form how expressive and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god."

The human body is an important instrument in the Christian religion. Man must care for his body, mind, and soul. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

How many really think highly of their bodies? They will take care of a watch, or an automobile, or a radio, and forget the intricate machinery of the body, so delicate and yet so strong and so terribly abused.

When we are in pain, let our minds go back to the days when we were in health and think how we abused our body by the sin of over-indulgence in every department:

When we permitted our appetites to find their unlimited satisfaction without thinking of the words of the Apostle, "Be temperate in all things." Abuses and not the proper use of the things of life are, in most instances, responsible for the pain, and not God. God warned us away from those paths to pain.

Gluttony, drunkenness, and many forms of vice are the real causes of pain. When they go, much pain will go with them.

God sent His Son into this world to show us how to live, and He gives us His power to enable us to live. It is true His life was a perfect one, and we shall never reach perfection this side of the grave, but we can at least begin that perfection here and now.

Jesus bids us follow His way of life. To do this is to help in removing the causes of pain. There is no room for sin in the economy of Heaven.

Think of the Pain We Bring to Others

We are so related to each other in life that our actions, whether good or bad, have their effect upon others even more than we realize.

When we give thought to the pain which we inflict upon others we shall perhaps awaken to the seriousness of it all and strive to remove the many causes of pain which surround us everywhere.

What about the sin of Greed? Man's greed and

self-esteem have caused others to suffer untold misery. Man's ungodly attitude toward those in his employ. The boys and girls obliged to work and earn a livelihood, crowded in stuffy factories, with small pay and long hours, are the victims of greed.

What about godless passion? Man's lust has been another cause of much pain to others. The children who come into life physically and mentally handicapped for life's work are victims of the "lusts of the flesh."

What about the results of war? The pain and sorrow that comes with it. The widows, the orphans, the crippled, the blind, the insane, all the victims of man's pride and envy and hatred and malice and jealousy.

Are we going to blame God for these things? No! "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning."

Jesus has been calling us away from these things for over nineteen hundred years, for they are the things which cause so much pain and suffering in the world. Join the ranks of consecrated men and women and help to solve the "problem" of pain, by assisting to remove its many causes that lie all about us.

All true, all faultless, all in tune
Creation's wondrous story
Opened in mystic unison
To last till time expire.

Man only mars the sweet accord
O'erpowering with harsh din
The music of Thy works and word
Ill matched with grief and sin.

The Incomprehensible Causes of Pain

Let us admit that there is pain, the causes of which we do not comprehend.

In spite of our inability to understand the causes, we can at least endeavor to use their opportunity and seek their purpose. All the great souls of this earth have suffered, and sorrow has always been a great teacher.

It was "midnight darkness" when Milton's eyes were closed in blindness, but he gave us *Paradise Lost,* which came from the eyes of his soul.

The greatest poem by Tennyson was written while his soul was in sorrow for the death of his friend.

The men and women who have seen visions and dreamed dreams, who have made large contributions to the high and noble things in life, have been those who suffered pain and found its purpose and used the opportunity. They came out better men and women for the experience.

In closing, let me urge you to take your pain and your sorrow to Golgotha and have them spiritualized. "To curse God and die" because we suffer is to defeat the very purpose of pain and to lose perhaps the great-

est and best opportunity of real Christian service and inspiration.

"If any man will come after me," says Jesus, "let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Take your cross, and then erect it at Golgotha, beside the "Man of Sorrows," and there learn the lessons of life from the greatest Teacher in the world. He carries in His hand the cure for sorrows and pain. "He is acquainted with grief and was made perfect through suffering."

THE SIXTH WORD

CONTENTS

1. The Sacredness and Seriousness of Life.
2. The Purpose in Life.
3. Enthusiasm for the Best.

"It is finished."

The dark cloud has now been lifted from the sun's golden face and a beam of light shines upon the cross, casting to the ground a shadow of our dying Lord.

The darkness has disappeared and the Sun of Righteousness shines forth. He utters another word. "It is finished," we hear Him say.

While we do not fully understand the meaning of this word because we do not know all that Jesus has in His mind, we can at least conclude that He is here uttering words that reveal completeness.

His life on earth was finished. That we know. The purpose of His advent is finished. That we also realize. His great work of redemption was completed as far as He is concerned, and now it begins with man. All the things He came to do He finished and finished well.

I think these words are the words of victory. They reveal a sense of satisfaction; they strike a note of triumph.

To the eyes of those who watched at His cross nineteen hundred years ago He was an utter failure. To them these words could not have meant what they do to those who are watching at His cross today, with the experience and knowledge of the centuries since that tragedy on Golgotha.

He traveled life from its cradle to the grave and completely and perfectly finished each stage.

His finished life is so perfect that we find in Him the answer to all the problems of life and He becomes the Ideal of life for the young and the old.

The races of the earth may differ in many respects, but they all unite in Him. We see in Him the complete and perfect life for every member of the human family.

Let us for a moment think of our unfinished work in the light of the finished work of Jesus.

Think of the things we started out to do and never finished. The plan we contemplated that never materialized. The visions we saw and quickly dropped into oblivion. The endeavors to do better that soon became vague. The promises we made to the future that were never fulfilled. The high impulses which came to our hearts only to die a stifling death.

What do you imagine could be the reason for most of the incompleteness of our lives?

There are several reasons, of course, and many of them we shall not understand here, but a vast majority of these reasons are man-made.

I do not believe for one moment that we shall ever perfect ourselves here, but there are things that we can do and complete with some satisfaction while upon this earth. We can at least venture forth and strive for

perfect work and offer up our honest efforts to Him who is perfect.

We must not live for nothing.

There must be things for us to do here and now. To find them and do them, whether we succeed or not, is our privilege. In fact, we are not the judges of success or failure. Quite often our apparent failure is success with God. God does not measure success as the world does; His computing of values is different.

Think with me of some of the reasons for most of our incompleteness:

Failure to Realize the Sacredness and Seriousness of Life

Jesus always regarded life in the world as a serious matter and used to best advantage all the opportunities which presented themselves. Whatever He did He did perfectly and the Finished Life we now see is a Life in which every part was complete in itself and in its relation to others.

In the Twenty-first Psalm we read the words of King David, "He asked life of Thee and Thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever."

Our disregard for the seriousness and sacredness of life in many quarters results in much incompleteness. "Life is not an empty dream." It has its re-

sponsibilities. It has its opportunities. It has its privileges. The dance hall and the theaters are not the only places where life is to be spent. To many it seems as if life were just one sweet round of amusements. To others it is like a "merry-go-round"—they ride all their years and never get anywhere.

Is it any wonder that life loses its inspiration? That it becomes entangled in incompleteness? That some people become cynical as they grow old?

They have missed the value of life. They measured it in dollars and cents, in houses and farms and other worldly possessions. They get life mixed up with living, and possessing the material instead of the spiritual.

My friends, anything coming from God is sacred and serious. God gave us a life. What are we doing with it? To do nothing with it is a sign we don't realize how serious and sacred it is. It is to be used to His glory, not to be wasted promiscuously in nothingness.

> Lay hold of life, and it shall be
> Thy joy and crown eternally.

Let its seriousness confront you. Realize that your personality is your great instrument. There are things for you to do here that no one else can do. Think of the responsibility that God has placed upon you. See the opportunity to serve which He offers you. Ven-

ture forth and conquer in His name, and much of the incompleteness of life will vanish.

Failure to Have a Purpose in Life

Another reason for much incompleteness is that we go out into life without a map or an idea as to the direction in which we are going or what we shall do. Purposeless lives aim at nothing, and they hit it every time. The easiest way to defeat life is to have no purpose in it. Our interest is lost, or devoted to lower things, our ambitions cease to be inspiring and we settle down to mere existence instead of a life.

Jesus came into life with a purpose and He constantly kept that purpose in His mind. It led Him to Golgotha, but that made no difference. It was in His purpose and He carried out that purpose to the bitter end.

So have the men in history who "left footprints on the sands of time." They had a purpose, not an excuse, for living. Columbus started with a purpose. George Washington had a purpose. Abraham Lincoln had a purpose, and so had millions of others who contributed something to their day and generation.

If there is no purpose, then trials and tribulations have no meaning, and discouragement has no antidote.

It is to be regretted that so many of our youth start

life without a purpose and waste so much of their wonderful time sitting along the curbstones on the road of life. They haven't made up their minds what they shall do. Their talents and their education are not united for any definite act.

A purpose in life is the one condition for completeness, and until we have the purpose we shall have chaos. We shall go blundering through life like blind men groping in darkness.

Keep some purpose worth while before you and you will see much of life's incompleteness giving way as you move toward your goal.

Enthusiasm for the Best

Jesus was an enthusiast. He loved His work. It was part of Him and He was part of it. He attained His purpose even though it ended on a cross. His purpose brought Him there. He was "faithful even unto death" and received a "crown of life."

All great and noble purposes have their desert and their cross and their misery. If you love your purpose well enough and are enthusiastic about it, the sufferings you endure or anticipate serve as inspirations. The dangers will never deter you. You will accept them as part of the great whole.

When Lindbergh set his purpose before him, all the

dangers of that virgin voyage in the air across the Atlantic only served to steady him on his course. The greater the danger the greater the victory.

So it must ever be with us. We must have more zeal in life, more determination to see it reach its purpose. Too many are detouring at the sign of danger. They prefer to seek a lower purpose rather than to make a greater effort to overcome. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out."

Enthusiasm is needed if you ever expect to possess your purpose. Struggle gives character. Manliness has no limits, for man is now with Christ in God. Humanity reaches up into divinity.

The words of that master preacher, Phillips Brooks, are ringing in my ears:

"Do not pray for easy lives; pray to be stronger men.

"Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers, but for powers equal to your tasks."

Look to Golgotha and see man's power to conquer. We are watching a victorious life in its completeness.

Our life is rapidly fleeting onward. We are growing older every minute. Days and hours fly quickly, taking with them the opportunities to serve that we have failed to use.

This age and generation is calling for us—each one

of us. There are problems to solve. There are deeds to accomplish. There is life to live.

Shall we join our Lord and with His help strive to complete our lives and give them up to Him with a note of triumph, or shall we drag our purposeless lives to a well-earned grave?

THE SEVENTH WORD

CONTENTS

1. The Fatherhood of God.
2. The Brotherhood of Man.

"Father, into Thine hands I commend my spirit."

As we listen to these final words from the Cross, "Father, into Thine hands I commend my spirit," they seem to bring to our minds fond memories of the days when we were children and, in the sweet simplicity of childhood, we knelt at the side of the bed and repeated those familiar words:

> Now I lay me down to sleep,
> I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
> If I should die before I wake,
> I pray the Lord my soul to take.

It is the same thought in different words. Both prayers are commendatory. Both reveal the attitude of faith.

Jesus was always conscious of the presence of His Father. He reminded His disciples that He was never alone. The Father was with Him. He began His ministry with "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business"; when His disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray, He said, "When ye pray say, 'Our Father.' He now closes His ministry with the same word, "Father," on His lips.

It is Jesus who gave the world that new name for

God. No man ever before had thought of God as a Universal Father. If they ever thought of God as a Father, he was Father to their particular tribe or race or nation.

In ages past men searched after God, for He was an object of great fear. His wrath must be appeased. The thunder was His voice rebuking His children. The wind and storm were His agents of destruction, the lightning to burn homes and forests, the wind and storm to ruin man's crops. He was an angry God and must be appeased. A God of vengeance, a God whose delight was to hurt those who inhabit the earth.

So primitive man ventured forth to slay and offer up his first-born child to this terrible God dwelling in yonder mountain. The poor, the blind, the crippled and all other unfortunates in life were being punished by this God for the sins committed in the flesh. To appease the wrath of this angry God was primitive man's greatest desire.

The Old Testament is a beautiful record in the evolution of the idea of God. It begins with the crudest conception of God and carries us all the way through until we reach the New Testament, in which Christ reveals the true nature of God as that of a Father.

The only idea we must ever entertain of God is that of a Father. From infancy to old age we are under the guiding hand and loving care of an Eternal Father.

We stand before Him alone, not as groups. He knows each one of us by name. God is a Father, not a tyrant, as some would have us believe Him to be. "A Father loveth His children."

Let us consider two points:

The Fatherhood of God

It may seem hard to some to believe in the fatherhood of God. The many difficulties which surround us demand faith for such a creed. Let us, however, think of it this way. We are finite and limited to space and time, and hence we think accordingly. God is infinite, and therefore, to understand all His plans and actions is impossible for finite man. Human nature is so constituted that if it understood all about God it would soon start out looking for another God whom it could not fully comprehend. The unknown must always be greater than the known. It is part of our nature to feel so.

It is far better for us to be satisfied with the revelation of God we have in Christ. The Apostle Paul says, "Now I know in part." "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face." Study the life of Jesus. See what He did. See how He loved. See how He sacrificed. Listen to what He says. Then, when something occurs to dim our faith

in God as a Father, turn to Jesus and we shall see that, in spite of things to the contrary, Jesus is telling us that God is a Father and that He is revealing that idea of fatherhood to us. Patience is a Christian virtue. Wait, and we shall see and understand later. Trust and hold firmly to the words of Jesus.

Think for a moment of God's Love for us. The story of the Cross is the story of that Love. If we live up to the light we have received, more will be revealed. For "In His light shall we see light." Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; whosoever followeth after me will not walk in darkness." That is sufficient.

When we realize the meaning of the fatherhood of God, our prayers take on a different aspect. They cease to have the element of a bargain in them. They cease to say to God, "If you make me well again, I'll go to church regularly," or "If God will do this for me, I'll do that for Him."

The prayer of a Christian to His Father is communion and fellowship and worship. Petitions are a very small portion of prayer—"your Father knoweth what things ye have need of" better than you do, and He will give them to you. The meaning of prayer is enriched when we think of God as a Father. Prayer loses the aspect of a business proposition and becomes as natural to a man as breathing. We learn to pray to our Heavenly Father not only when we need some-

thing, but we pray because we want to "talk things over" with one we know is deeply interested.

When I want to think what God is like, I think of what Jesus was here on earth, and then prayer to a God like that is no effort.

Think again of sin in the light of the fatherhood of God.

The story of the Prodigal Son is a beautiful example. We may move out of our Father's house—out to that far country, there to spend our talents unworthily—but that Father's love goes with us. It is that love that will bring us back to Him in repentance and nothing else. When we "come to ourselves" we come to realize a Father's love pulling at our hearts.

The religion of Christ is no hell-fire-and-damnation message. It is the religion of Love. Thousands may be converted through the fear of Hell and everlasting punishment, but tens of thousands are converted by the attractive power of the love of a Father.

"He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love." God wants your love. He wants you to love Him and not dread Him. To work with Him, not away from Him. The closer we draw to Him, the more we shall realize how close He is to us, and the less will we care to betray that love. One who truly loves will never hurt his beloved. God is the great

Lover and we are His beloved. Live then in His atmosphere of love.

The Brotherhood of Man

The fatherhood of God means that we are His children, and if we are His children, then we must be brothers one with another.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, this is the first and greatest commandment, and the second IS LIKE UNTO IT, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

That was Jesus' summary of the Law. Both commandments have love in them. Love for God and love for our fellow men. Upon these two pillars rests the religion of Christ.

The brotherhood of man is not a theory but a fact. We share a common Father. We share a common Love. We share a common life. In this age of merciless competition and heartless struggle it is well for us to keep the brotherhood of man in mind lest we attempt, as many do, to climb to heights of selfish ambition at the expense of our fellow man. If you are a lover of your fellow men, you are a true child of your Heavenly Father. These two must go together.

Think of that wonderful petition for the unity of God's people in the Book of Common Prayer:

> As there is but one Body and one Spirit and one Hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, so may we be all of one heart and of one soul united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee.

In closing, then, we look once more at Golgotha.

The sun is now sinking in the west; soon there will be darkness over the earth.

Jesus has traveled westward with the sun and there would be darkness in the heart of man if He were not to rise victorious over death.

We, too, are traveling westward. Let us travel by the light of His life, so that when we reach our journey's end we can with faith and hope and love gently recline into His everlasting arms saying, "Father, into Thine hands I commend my spirit."

THE END

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